THE REDEMPTION of Time.

OR

A Sermon contayning very good remedies for them that haue misſpent their time: Shewing how they ſhould redeeme it comfortably.

By *M. W.* Maſter in Arts.

PSALME. 90. 12.

Lord teach vs to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts vnto wiſedome.

LONDON:
Printed by *T. Eſte*, for *Thomas Man*, dwelling in Pater-noſter-Row, at the ſigne of the Talbot. 1608.

THE REDEMPTION OF TIME.

EPHESIANS. 5. 16.

Redeeme the Time, because the dayes are euill.

WHilſt I bethought my ſelfe of a portion of holy writ to treate vpon, that might hold ſome agreement with the preſent ſeaſon: this ſhort ſentence offred it ſelfe vnto my minde. At the firſt I reiected it as impertinent, but after a ſecond and more ſerious view, mee thought it was the moſt fit Scripture that I could make choyce of on this occaſion: for howbeit, it hath pleaſed the common ſort of men, to ſtile theſe feſtiuall dayes with the name of good times; yet by reaſon of the groſe abuſage

to which the corruption of men hath made them ſubiect, they may very well receiue an alteration of their title, and in a quite contrary phraſe be tearmed euill daies, yea, and (that in the higheſt degree of all) the worſt of dayes. Now in this time wherin time is ſo lauiſhly miſ-pent, I hope it cannot ſeeme vnconuenient, or vntimely, to giue a briefe exhortation concerning the right vſe of Time.

Theſe words which I haue read, lead vs into that path: being part of an exhortation begunne in the former verſe. There in general, he had exhorted them to bee moſt ſtrictly carefull of their wayes, and to direct their courſe of life in ſuch reſpectiue ſort, as they might deſerue the name of wiſe, not vnwiſe men: commending herein vnto them and vs, that very ſtrictneſſe and preciſeneſſe wherewith the world hath now long ſince pickt a quarrell & falne out. And becauſe this was but a generall rule, hee ſeconds it with ſome perticulars, by which we may be led on to the like inſtances in other matters. The firſt of theſe ſpecials is placed in the well diſ-

posing of time, in this verſe: Where hauing ſet downe the duety of Chriſtians in this behalfe, hee backs it with a reaſon; which in it ſelfe and to a ſpirituall vnderſtanding, is moſt ſound and firme, but to the carnall iudgement of a carnal man, is void of all ſoundneſſe and reaſon. The dutie is, to buy out the time, to traffique with it, as men do with wares, and when it is in other mens hands (as I may ſay) to giue ſomething (yea any thing) that we may get it into our owne hands, for good vſes: He meanes that we ſhould vſe our greateſt care and diligence (euen that which wee would imploy in matters moſt nearely concerning vs) to win all the time we poſsibly can, for the duties of Religion and Godlineſſe. His argument to confirme this exhortation, is taken from the contrary, (if wee looke on it with a carnall eye, it will ſeeme inconſequent, halting and not able to beare vp the Concluſion) it is, *becauſe the dayes are euill*: That is, the cuſtomes and manners of the greateſt part of men that liue, are wicked and lewde. Now becauſe the number and route of

the world is so strongly bent to all maner of vngodlines, as that they haue euen tainted the time it selfe, and corrupted the very dayes: the Apostle would therefore haue the Ephesians, and all other Christians so much the more industrious, to take all seasons and occasions for the bettering of themselues: Because other men are naught and stark naught, therefore ought faithfull Christians to be good and very good, and to turne all opportunities to this end and vse, that they may be furtherances to make them good.

The world would haue framed a more crooked conclusion from this ground, and haue said: because men are so generally and extreamly bad (for that is noted in saying *the dayes are euill*) we must therefore needs straine curtesie a little, and not be too strict, least we should be ouermuch different from other men, & incur the by-name of Singularists. But the Apostle telleth vs, that because the wayes of men are excessiuely disordered & full of naughtines, we should bestow so much the more paines, that we might

might not be carried downe the violent ſtreame and deluge of vnſanctified liuing, and vnto this intent ſhould earneſtly watch & diligently take all good occaſions of getting and doing good. You ſee in part the meaning of this ſhort ſentence, which containeth a few words indeede, but is ſtuft full of worthy matter, which (according as my weakneſſe can attaine) I ſhall ſtriue to ſpread before your eyes, vnfolding it in ſuch manner as that you may perceiue the things that lay therin cloſely wrapped vp before.

The point which the words offer to our conſideration at the firſt ſight, is this; that all Chriſtians ought to be very good husbands for their time. Good houres and opportunities are marchandize of the higheſt rate and price: and whoſoeuer will haue his ſoule thriue, muſt not ſuffer any of theſe bargains of time to paſſe him, but muſt buy vp, and buy out all the minutes therof. No man of trade can bee more carefull to chaffer and deale in the moſt gainful things that pertaine to his occupation, then we

Doctrine.

ſhould be to deale in this ware of time, wherein euery Chriſtian is or ſhould be a well taught, and practiſed dealer. As ſuch kinde of men (if they can eyther make money themſelues, or borrow it of their friends, yea or elſe (ſuch is the greedineſſe of men) take it vp of the Vſurer) will not let ſlip any commoditie, wherein they haue skill, and are perſwaded, that it wil bring in large profit within a ſhort time of returne: ſo ſhould euery good man vſe all diligence (for diligence is in ſtead of mony here, and care in ſtead of coyne) to gaine euery day, euery houre, and euery minute (ſo much as may bee poſsible) from all vnprofitable actions, and ouer-worldly affaires, to beſtow the ſame on the duties of Religion and Godlineſſe. This being ſuch a parcell of ware, as if it bee wiſely beſtowed, when it is heedefully gotten, will come in againe with both hands full of profit for recompence of ones paines taken in that behalfe. This ſelfe ſame exhortation, this ſame Apoſtle deliuers in ſo many words vnto the Coloſsians, when he ſaith: *walk wiſely towards*

Col. 4. 5.

towards them that are without, and redeeme the time. See how *Paul*, an old, beaten and experienced dealer in these matters for the soule, doth neyther forget, nor neglect to teach his apprentises (as I may call them) the very secrets & misteries of the trade of good liuing, wherof this is one, euen the thriftie laying out, and getting in of time: which being repeted to the Collossians (as well as deliuered to these Ephesians) comes with a double charge vpon our mindes, to make vs heedfull in these bargaines. And that excellent petition of *Moses* the man of God, doth meane nothing else but this, when in other words hee saith: *Teach me so to number my dayes* Psal. 90. 12. *that I may apply my heart to wisedome.* For he meanes that God would inable him with grace, so seriously to consider of the shortnes of this life, and the transitorinesse of this present world; as that he might take all occasions, and vse all meanes to bend his hart to the seeking and obtaining of the true knowledge of God & himself, and so the true feare of god, which is the beginning of wisdom.

And

And the want of this husbandry Christ doth mournfully lament in the Cittie of Ierusalem, setting out vnto vs also the grieuous and dismall effects and consequents of this heedlesnesse, in regard of taking time, & vsing the fit opportunitie. *O* (saith hee) *if thou hadst euen knowne, at the least in this thy day, those things that pertaine vnto thy peace, But now are they hid from thine eyes, &c.* As if he had said; hitherto thou hast had the meanes to learne what made for thy good, and what might haue preuented thy ruines; and if thou haddest but euen at this last houre marked and considered them, thou mightest haue escaped these fearefull iudgements: but now that thou hast beene all this while wanting to God, hee will hereafter bee wanting to thee, thou shalt neuer haue any true knowledge of these things, nor euer auoid these miserable calamities. Because they did not vse time whilst time did serue, to repent and turne to God, therefore after it was too late, God would not heare them, nor help them. They that refuse the good offer of a good bargain

Luk. 19. 42

from

from God, shall not haue this bargaine offred againe at their pleasure: yea, God will not deale with them at their leasure, that would not deale with him at his leasure. And Wisdom in *Salomons* wise booke of Prouerbs speakes to this effect of vngodly men, that when their miserie comes, shee will laugh at them, because when shee gaue her good instructions to preuent this miserie, they laughed at her. Pro. 1. 24. 25. 26.

The neglect of taking the fit time and occasion to follow wisdomes holesome counsell and to come when shee cals; plungeth scornfull men into such a depth of miserie, as that there is no meanes of recouery. For when wisdome laughes a man to scorne, whether shall hee repaire for succour? And to this intent (of husbanding our time well) notable is the saying of the same Apostle in another place, bidding vs, *whilst wee haue time, doe good to all:* As much as if he had told vs, that time must so much the rather bee bestowed in doing good (and then it is redeemed) because we haue no such great store of it, as wee doe Gal. 6. 10.

doe fooliſhly imagine. The veſſell of time is not ſo full (as moſt men dreame) nay it will ſoone come to the bottome: it is then wiſedome to ſpare betime, and not in the very dregs and lees. All theſe places doe in moſt plaine manner confirme the point, *viz.* that euery Chriſtian muſt be very ſauing and thriftie of his time, that is, muſt conuert all occaſions to the good of his ſoule, and furthering of his reckoning, not ſuffering by his will any houre or minute (more then needs muſt) to be laid out in any thing, but matters that may fit him for a better life. This is in truth to haue ones converſation in heauen, when one vpon the leaſt occaſion is ready to make one ſtep further thitherwards: when one giues all his time to God, but ſo much as may be more eſpecially to religious exerciſes, and ſuch things as doe after a peculiar ſort make for a better life, not letting ſlip any meanes of furtherance that is offered him this way.

Now for your better direction in this ſauing thrift, and for the more full vnderſtanding of this point, and more

eaſie

eaſie practiſing of this needefull dutie, I purpoſe to ſtand ſome while in ſhewing theſe two things. Firſt, from what Time is to be redeemed. Secondly, what the time is which muſt bee redeemed.

For the firſt, we muſt vnderſtand that there be fiue huckſters of time, very cormorants and ingroſers of this precious ware, which betwixt them (for the moſt part) get vp all the houres of mens liues, not ſuffring the ſoule to enioy ſo much as an houre for it own vſe, vpon the beſt occaſion to benefit it ſelf. Theſe theeues, when I haue tolde you their names, I will deſcribe more at large. They bee: Firſt, vaine ſports: Secondly, vaine ſpeeches: Thirdly, immoderate ſleeping or ſluggiſhnes: Fourthly, vaine thoughts: Laſtly, immoderate following of worldly buſineſſes and affaires, Play, Twatling, Sleeping, fooliſh thinking, exceſſiue rooting in the earth. Now for theſe fond ſports (amongſt which I comprehend riotous feaſting and belly-cheare, a companion of gameing for the moſt part, and alſo that triffling and womanniſh diſeaſe of curiouſneſſe in putting

on

on apparell) for theſe, I ſay, it is eaſie to proue that they doe eate vp theſe good houres, which otherwiſe, would much inrich the ſoule of man. *Salomon* the wiſeſt of meer men that liued ſince *Adam*, hath ſet it downe as a ſure rule (that neuer failes, ſcarce euer admits exception)

Pro. 21. 17 *That hee which loues paſtime ſhall bee poore, and he that loues wine and oile ſhall not be rich.* If this ſaying be vnderſtood onely of the body it is moſt true. For theſe things will make a man extreamly needy in the midſt of large poſſeſsions, and plentious reuenewes. But if we apply it to the ſoule (as I ſee not cauſe why it may not bee applyed to both) it is moſt vniuerſally true. Hee that is ſo wedded to his pleaſures, and beſotted vpon vaine delights, as that the current of his life is carried that way, or elſe too great a part of the ſtreame is turned thither; ſhall bee deſtitute of vnderſtanding, ſhall haue a naked, ragged, tottred ſoule: and that comes becauſe he hath not vſed his time well, by the right imployment whereof hee might haue got wealth for his better part, I meane vnto

his minde and heart. A thread-bare hart needy of knowledge comes from a voluptuous life ſtuffed with pleaſures, and the Prophet *Iſaiah* cryes out with a woefull and a bitter cry, againſt thoſe which had the timbrell, the pipe, and the harp in their feaſt, but would not regard the work of the Lord: All their dayes were taken vp in eating and drinking, in banqueting and feaſting, in good cheere and mery making, ſo that there was no time to meditate and thinke on thoſe afflictions whereby God did warne them to repentance and amendement, which is moſt contrary to this duty of redeeming the time, for all this time is euen loſt and caſt away. And had we no other proofe then our owne experience in this behalfe, would it not manifeſtly conuince, that he which deſires to redeem the time, muſt flie theſe vaine delights & ſports? For doe we not plainely ſee what a canker it is in a number of mens liues, when many dayes they beſtow three or foure houres together, yea halfe the day if not the whole, in dicing, carding, bowling, ſhouell-boord, or the like idle (if not wicked Iſai. 5. 12.

wicked) exercises? doth not this waſt and poure forth time ouer lauiſhly? Or can that man haue ſo much reſt and quiet, or ſo much fitnes and opportunitie to do good to his ſoule, as his wiſe care in cutting off theſe needleſſe recreations (or vexations rather) would haue afforded him? For theſe vaine pleaſures are not alone miſchieuous hinderers of this thrift, in that they conſume the very houres themſelues; but as much, or more alſo in that they diſſettle the heart, and pull the affections out of ioynt, ſo that a man is driuen to take as much paines to ſet his heart to a good exerciſe, as would well haue diſpatched the duety, had hee not beene thus vnfitted. Now what a miſerable loſſe is it when a man is robbed of his time, and of his heart both at once? And by both kept from reading, praying, meditating, examining his heart, or any ſuch good exerciſe for his ſoules aduantage. Wherefore if any man would ſo preuent theſe vaine and fooliſh ſports that they ſhould not ſpoyle him of his heart and houres: let him obſerue theſe two rules in his ſports,

and

and then hee ſhall doe well in theſe reſpects.

Firſt, (this being preſuppoſed that he doe not vſe any recreations, but thoſe which he can proue to be in themſelues lawfull) firſt, I ſay, for the beginning of recreation, let euery man know that recreation muſt follow labor, for the moſt part, or if at any time it goe before it, it muſt be very little, onely to fit one for labour. The Lord allowes a man no ſport, though neuer ſo lawfull in it ſelfe, vntill ſuch time as his body or mind do ſtand in neede of it, chiefly when they haue been buſied in ſome ſuch honeſt affaires, as by wearyeng them, haue made them vnfit for further labor, ſo that they muſt againe bee fitted thereto by recreation. Vntill paines-taking haue made the body or mind not ſo wel able to take pains, there is no allowance ordinarily for recreation. All our ſports and recreations, if wee will vſe them well, (I ſpeake of thoſe which are lawfull) muſt be to our body or minde, as the Mowers whetſtone or riffle is to his Syth to ſharpen it when it growes dull. Hee that when his

Syth is dulled, will not (vpon a desire to doe more worke) take time to whet it, shall cut lesse, and with more paine, and more vnhandsomely then hee neede to doe: so he that when his body or mind is tyred or heauy, will not vse some honest refreshing, shall doe lesse, and with lesse dexteritie then he might. But on the other side, if the Mower should do nothing from morning to noone, or from noone to night but whet, whet, whet, rubbing his Syth, hee would both marre the Syth, and be counted an idle workeman also, for loosing his dayes work: so hee that will run after the most honest delights when neyther the wearinesse of his body, nor heauinesse of minde requires the same, (but onely vpon a fond lust or longing after them) shall in time destroy his wit and strength, and in the meane season, meruailous vnthriftily mis-spend his time. Therefore let not a man beginne the day with play, though neuer so lawfull, vnlesse his body or mind require some necessary exercise to make it more apt for his calling. Hee that sets into the day sportingly, shall be sure to

go

go through it, eyther lumpiſhly or ſinfully, much more if he ſpend all the day from morning to night in playing, let it bee neuer ſo much holy day, or haue hee what other excuſe hee will. This rule is for the beginning of ſports.

The ſecond is for the meaſure and continuance of them, where this is a generall and a firme direction: That it is not lawfull for a man in an ordinary courſe to ſpend more time in any paſtime vpon any day, then in religious exerciſes, I meane chiefely priuate religious exerciſes, I ſay, it is vtterly vnlawfull to beſtow a larger time any day vpon the moſt lawfull delight, then in priuate Religious exerciſes, or at leaſt in a cuſtomable courſe ſo to doe. This is plainely prooued by that which Chriſt ſpeakes to vs, ſaying: *Firſt ſeeke the kingdome of God and the righteouſneſſe thereof.* You ſee here commaunded to perfer the ſeeking of heauen before any other thing whatſoeuer, to let that haue the chiefe place in our ſoules and in our liues. Now he that firſt ſeeks the kingdome of heauen, cannot beſtow more Mat. 6. 33.

time in ſports of any ſort, then in thoſe things which doe directly make for the obtaining of eternall life, and that righteouſneſſe which will bring one thereunto, ſuch as are hearing and reading the Word, praying, meditating, examining the heart, conferring, and the like. And ſurely this is a moſt equall thing, that the moſt needful duty ſhould haue the moſt time beſtowed vpon it. Yea, and it is a moſt eaſie rule to all ſorts of men, that haue ſeaſoned their hearts with the true feare of God. For if a mans calling lye in bodily works, then the very exerciſes of Religion are a refreſhing to his body, in that he doth for the ſpace while they continue deſiſt from his bodily labour, (and his calling affords ſufficient ſtirring of the body for health) ſo that if hee be religiouſly minded, and haue indeed ſet his delight on God, he may well giue as much time to theſe actions, as to any carnall ſports. But if any mans calling lie in ſtudy, or ſuch like labour of the minde, firſt, the change is a great refreſhing, and varietie a delight; and then there be religious exerciſes, which will refreſh the minde

minde as well as any ſports, and for ſo much exerciſe as health requires, it is not long in vſing, becauſe nature is here, as in other matters content with a little, howſoeuer men ſeeke excuſes by beelying her: ſo that at the leaſt, an equall portion of time muſt be alotted to God, and religion, as to ſports and delights, euen of ſtudents, if they will firſt ſeeke the kingdome of God. Therefore let a man meaſure out the time of ſporting and recreating himſelfe, by the time hee takes to pray, to read, to meditate, to ſing Pſalmes, to confer of good things, or the like, and know that hee hath not libertie from God to imploy ordinarily ſo much time, neuer to imploy one minute more, in the moſt vnoffenſiue ſports, then in theſe ſeruices of God. Now let a man conforme himſelfe to theſe two rules. Begin not play till need of body or mind craue it: Continue not ſports longer then a man hath or ſhall continue ſome godly priuate exerciſe of religion, and hee ſhall ſaue his time well from this firſt Theefe.

Now comes to bee conſidered the

next ſpender or rather robber of time, that is, idle twatling or babling. And concerning this our Sauiour Chriſt deales
Mat.12.36 plainely with vs, ſaying: *That of euery idle word which men ſhall ſpeake, they ſhall giue account at the day of iudgement*: think well of this ſentence, and lay vp euery word. Thou muſt not alone giue account of thy woorks, but alſo of thy words; thou muſt not onely bee called to a reckoning for moouing of thy hand, foot or whole body, but of thy tongue alſo, and that not alone for wicked words, ſinfull words, harmefull words, ſpeeches in themſelues infectious and rotten; but for idle and waſt words; and not onely for a number of idle words, for a whole throng or fleete of them, but for euery idle word.

Now then if there bee an account to bee giuen, and a reckoning to be made for theſe rubbiſh ſpeeches; iudge if it bee not a want of redeeming the time, to lay it out in ſuch a thing as will bring a ſore & heauie burthen afterwards without repentance to caſt it off; and iudge if hee which makes much of time had

not

not need take much heed of this ill-ſpent breath. Not alone then wicked ſpeaking (when one belcheth forth lewd and filthy words) not ſlanderous and backbiting talke (when one whiſpers of his neighbours faults behinde his backe, vttering perhaps alſo lying reports, and fathering that vpon him which hee neuer did or meant) but euen vaine, needleſſe and vnprofitable words (which tend to no good or wholeſome vſe for the ſoule or body) are a miſpending of time and contrary to this precept, and therefore alſo to bee ſhunned of him that is this way thriftily diſpoſed.

No man can talke idely, but he caſts himſelfe vpon a double damage, euen the loſſe of a word, & the loſſe of time: two great loſſes, what euer men imagine of them: And therefore the Apoſtle *Paul* alſo findes fault with a certaine ſort of women that were pratlers, which would goe from houſe to houſe twatling and babling out frothie ſpeech, that was good for nothing, which fault hee condemnes as a matter ſomething worſe then idleneſſe, or doing nothing, when

one talkes toyes or trifles, and speakes shadows or gawds that yeeld no profit. Such twatling cuts out the hart of good time, for it hath seldome any measure, it creepes by little and little over a great part of the day and sometimes of the night. How many winter nights doe men suffer themselues to be robbed of by this childish babling? And in the
Eph. 5. 4. fourth verse of this Chapter, the Apostle forbids foolish speaking & iesting: The one is a roaring discourse, gathering together a great deale of chaffie geere that will feed no man; a busie but absurd prosecuting of a headlesse and footlesse tale (as wee may call it in our phrase.) The other is a setting of ones selfe, and sharpning of his wit, to coine pretty and witty scoffes and conceits that may moue laughter, and for this end onely: Both these are condemned, as vnlawfull, and vnbeseeming Christians.

There must bee a difference made betwixt a smooth and pleasant vttering of ones minde in seemely phrases, and good and delightfull termes & manner: And this whetting of the wit to bandie

and

and toſſe ſharpe and briniſh taunts and quirks.

Now this pleaſantneſſe of the moſt honeſt ſort is not to bee vſed as a cuſtome, but in the nature of a refreſhing, when men are dulled, for better matter. For laughter being a power of Gods creating, and wholeſome to the body, and therefore lawfull, it cannot bee vnlawfull in a ſeemely ſort, harmeleſſy to moue laughter by words, but it muſt not be ieſting: one muſt not giue himſelfe to it, and make it his occupation for an houre or two together. Now none can bee ignorant how great a hinderance this vaine ſpeech is to the well imploying of time. For doe we not ſee that in many places whole dayes are caſt away in the deepe gulfe of rouing, and vnprofitable runnagate babling to no purpoſe? And that whole meales are deuoured in gibing and ieſting, if without taking the ſacred name of God in vaine, & hurting ones brothers name (which is very ſeldome) yet exceſsiuely, and not without thruſting out better matter, which is a grieuous fault.

Where-

Wherefore that we may be well armed againſt this robber, let vs obſerue diligently theſe two rules.

Firſt, let vs make conſcience of our words, and of the mouing of our tongue, knowing it to be a neceſſary duty that God hath impoſed vpon vs, to haue our words alwayes gracious, and ſeaſoned with ſalt alwayes good for the matter, & tempred with wiſdome for the manner. Which precept the Apoſtle ads preſently after this, of redeeming the time (to the Colloſsians) as a notable part of it. The Law of grace then, muſt be the bridle of our tongue, and Wiſdome muſt raigne in our mouthes, ſo that we ſpeake nothing but that may which be for ſome profit, to our owne or others ſoule or body, being fitly tempred to the preſent circūſtances of time, place, &c. where and when wee ſpeake. For the words are gracious, not alone when they tend to the further edification of the Soule in ſome matter of religion, but alſo when they bee buſied about ones honeſt outward affaires and lawfull calling, this being a great furtherance to

Col. 4. 5.

godlineſſe

godlineſſe that a man know how (and accordingly practiſe it) to follow his calling with dexteritie and Wiſedome.

Now hee that would not haue vnneceſſary triffling wordes ſteale into his hart and out of his mouth, and ſo ſpoile him of good ſeaſons, muſt ſet it downe as a thing to which his conſcience is bound (as well as not to lye, ſweare or ſlander) not to ſpeake one word, whereof he cannot giue ſome reaſon from the good that he doth aime at in ſpeaking of it. And euery man muſt know that hauing let ſlip ſuch a word, hee hath committed ſuch a ſinne, as makes him liable to Gods iudgement, and to the ſentence of condemnation.

The want of reſoluing the hart thus, cauſeth many to take libertie to their tongues, (and harmefull libertie it is) & yet to thincke they haue done no harme to themſelues in ſo doing. And therefore the common excuſe of ſuch twatlers is this: I hope that it is no harme: yea, but what good was it? If it were not directed to ſome good, it hath done harme, for it hath broken Gods com-

commandement, and ſet thy ſelfe deeper in debt then thou was before, thou haſt one treſpaſſe more to anſwer for before Gods tribunall, no man ſhall euer auoid this puddle, that will not be perſwaded it is a damnable ſin to ſtep into it. Firſt, then labour to conuince thine heart, and frame thy practice to this rule in all ſpeaking.

Secondly, for honeſt comely mirth in ſpeech (beſides that it muſt not reliſh of luſt, nor ſauour of mallice and profaneneſſe, for then it is worſe then idle words) it ought to bee bounded with this rule, namely, that it bee vſed as a meanes to quicken our ſelues or others againſt ſome naturall heauines or deadneſſe, by which the heart is made vnapt for better conference and other exerciſes of more profitable vſe; and when this effect is brought to paſſe, that laughter hath ſcattered the miſt of dulneſſe from off the heart and minde, (or if no ſuch occaſion be offred) then let mirth & natural laughter, giue place to his betters, otherwiſe comming into a continued cuſtome, and ſhouldering out more need-

needfull communication, that takes the name and nature of ieſting, and is a thing much vnbeſeeming the ſtaidneſſe of a Chriſtian. Thus the tongue may bee bound from dealing falſly with the hart, and couſening the ſoule of good houres and occaſions.

Now followes the third deuourer of time, and that is immoderate ſleeping or ſluggiſhneſſe. The wiſe king *Salomon* bare a great hatred to this Theefe, and giues many warnings and caueats, wherby men might learne to take heed of it. The bed is as a very cunning and ſlye couſenour, that vſeth a pleaſing tricke to deceiue a man, and robs him vnder ſhew of friendſhip. Now *Salomon* hath made a moſt fit diſcription of a ſluggard caught by the wiles of ſleepe and ſloth, ſetting him out to the life. *Prou.6.9.10* Pro.6.9. 11. Where hee brings him in roming 10.11. himſelfe, and rubbing his eyes with an vnwilling hand, vttering broken and ſleepy ſentences, as one not halfe awake. Firſt, he cals him vp (as it were) ſaying: *How long wilt thou ſleepe, when wilt thou riſe out of thy ſleepe?* As if he had ſaid:

Ho,

Ho, ſir, it is time to get vp, what, not out of your bed yet, at this time of the day? Then mark the drowſie, ſlumbring, and ſenceleſſe anſwere: *A little ſleepes, a little ſlumbers*: (For the originall hath the words in the plurall number, well befitting a ſluggard) *a little folding of the hands to ſleepe.* See how ſpeaking of ſleep all is in the littles: and though he names ſleepes, yet it is but a little in his conceit. Hee tels not when hee will riſe, but hee cannot riſe yet, and when hee hath had enough, and too much already, then hee muſt haue a little more, begging for ſleepe as one would beg for bread. Hee askes a little, becauſe he would not bee denied. Firſt, hee muſt haue ſleepes, and hauing ſlept, he muſt haue ſlumbers, and hauing ſlumbred, he muſt fold his hands, and rome and tumble himſelfe. Behold a ſleeper in his colours: And mark what anſwere *Salomon* giues, hee ſpends no more time to call him vp, but tels him his doome as hee lyes in his bed. *Therefore thy pouerty comes as a trauailer, and thy neceſſity as an armed man*: As if hee had ſaid: well, be it ſo, if you will needs

ſleepe

ſleepe on, take your belly-full of ſleep, but know that ſith you ſhew ſuch skill in begging ſleepe, you ſhal euen become a beggar for it, ſith you will haue your fill of ſleep, you ſhall haue little enough of any wealth, pouertie will purſue you, and ouertake you, it will follow you, and ſurpriſe you, it will make haſt and ſtrike home, you cannot runne from it, nor reſiſt it, it comes with ſpeede and with force, it will take you in bed where you cannot flee away from it, nor driue it from you: and what he ſaith of outward pouertie, is moſt certaine of inward penurie, a ſluggard hath ſo much the leſſe grace, by how much hee hath the more ſleepes and ſlumbers. So the ſame wiſe King hath ſet out a ſluggard in another place, ſaying: that *a ſluggard tumbles himſelfe on his bed, as the doore on the hinges*, that is, he is ſtill there, and there muſt be ſuch adoe before he can bee remoued from off his cowch, as if one were to lift a doore off the hookes, a man muſt come with leauers to heaue him off. Call him, waken him, bid him riſe, &c. all is little enough to reare him. Pro. 16. 14

This

This ſluggiſh humour (you ſee) is condemned long agoe for a miſ-pender of time. And ſurely it is not alone very dangerous in regard of the quantitie, & muchneſſe of the time which it filcheth, but alſo in regard of the qualitie and goodneſſe; for it ordinarily feedes gluttonouſly on the very fat of time; it eates the very flowre of the day; & conſumes the firſt fruits of our houres, euen the morning ſeaſon. After ſleep hath made ſtrong what labour hath weakned, after that nature hath beene well refreſhed, and the reuiued ſpirits come with a freſh ſupply of ſtrength and nimbleneſſe to ſerue the body and the minde: then for want of exerciſe all growes dull againe, as a band of Souldiers that grow effeminate by lying in garriſon without labour, all the ſummer. Thus it robs one of the principall and moſt ſeaſonable time, when the minde and body were both in the greateſt fitnes to read, pray, meditate, or to diſpatch and caſt any matter of ones calling, it is a theefe that robs one, not of his baggage ſtuffe, but euen of his gold and Iewels. (For ſome time

time is better then other, as much as ſome mettall is better then others, and this alwayes for the moſt part takes away the moſt precious) yea, it hath one tricke as much & more dangerous then the former. If a man giue himſelfe to ſluggiſhneſſe, it will often follow him to Church, and cloſe vp his eyes and eares, both of body and minde from hearing and marking thoſe moſt wholeſome exhortations, comforts, reproofes, and inſtructions, which like ſo many pearles, Gods meſſenger with a liberall hand according to the pleaſure of his Lord, doth ſcatter amongſt men, that who ſo will may take them vp. The time of preaching and expounding the Word with applying it, is the time of harueſt, it is Gods market day, nay, it is his dole or princely congie, when hee giues gifts freely, and thoſe of great worth too, vnto thoſe that will take them. How can it chooſe but bee a great hinderance to a mans eſtate to ſleepe in harueſt, and to bee in bed at ſuch a time when ſo much wealth is beſtowing. Therefore this ſleepe you ſee, is a moſt

craftie and pernitious deceiuer, and doth with much cunning ouerreach a man, taking from him for the moſt part the morning time, and the time of hearing, two the moſt profitable ſeaſons, & the moſt worthy to bee redeemed of all others. Now againſt the deceit of this falſe companion, a may defend himſelfe by following theſe two rules.

First, it is not lawfull for any man vpon pretence of leaſure from buſineſſe to take more ſleepe then is required for the ſtrengthening and refreſhing of his nature. The meaſure of ones ſleepe or lying in bed muſt not bee according to ones buſineſſe, but ſo much as his nature requires, for the better inabling of it to performe the dutyes of his calling, and of religion. Indeede a man may and ought to breake his ſleepe, and ſtinte himſelfe in this regard when important buſineſſe, eyther for the ſoule or body doe preſſe vpon him, but no man muſt take more ſleepe then is requiſite for the ſufficient refreſhing of nature vpon vacation of neceſſary affaires. The reaſon of this is plaine. It is a ſin to ſtraine and

ſtretch

ſtretch naturall things for the ſeruing of luſt, beyond that end for which they were created and ordained. Now ſleepe and lying in bed was ordained for the ſtrengthening of nature, and for the repairing of the ſpirits diminiſhed by labour, wherefore it muſt not bee drawen beyond this end to the ſatisfying of a ſluggiſh humour. So that as it were a fault for a man to ſit, and cram himſelfe with meat, till his ſtomacke would turne back the morſels, becauſe no buſineſſe did call him from the table: ſo it is a ſin to giue ones ſelfe to immoderate ſleeping or ſlugging in bed (as our word is, to ſleep compaſſe) becauſe no vrgent matter doth call him vp. This is to bee on the bed as a doore on the hinges, that one cannot riſe til a leauer come, that is, ſomthing euen almoſt of neceſsitie. It is wicked to ſurfet on ſleepe as well as on meate. So then it ſhall bee a great helpe againſt ſluggiſhneſſe, to know that God allowes not any man to be ſluggiſh, and therfore to accuſtome ones ſelf to timely riſing. For in this one thing cuſtome hath as much power almoſt as in any thing;

ſo that looke what is ones vſe, that hee ſhall hardly refraine. Hee that doth cuſtomably forſake his bed ſo ſoone as hee feeles his nature freſh, and his ſpirits quickned, ſhall with eaſe keepe on in ſo doing. But hee that takes liberty to laze himſelfe, and dull his ſpirits for lack of vſe, ſhall finde the more he ſleepes, the more he ſhall be drowſie, till he become a very ſlaue to his bed and make ſleepe his maſter. So a healthfull body by confeſsing it to be his duety, (and through cuſtome though hard at firſt) drawing it vnto a nature, may haue the morning at commaund. And this is the firſt rule.

Secondly, for the time of hearing the word, hee that would not bee troubled with ſuch ſluggiſhneſſe then, muſt looke that he doe vſe meate, and drinke, and ſleepe moderately, in the firſt ſeaſon of it, and then ſtriue to quicken himſelfe againſt carnall heauineſſe and ſorrow, by prayer and meditation before hand, which two things will keepe a healthfull body in ſuch good temper, that ſleepe ſhall not ordinarily oppreſſe it in this moſt ſacred exerciſe.

Now

Now followes the fourth Theefe to bee araigned, and that is idle thoughts. Mans Imaginations will bee working, and tossing conceits vp and downe almost continually. Now all men by nature are so tainted with the sickenesse of vanitie that their mindes will runne willingly after nothing else, but that which vanitie begets. And for this cause men haue taken vp a prouerbe, to dazle their eyes, (if it might bee) that this might not seeme a fault. They say, that thought is free, as though one should neuer answere for idle thoughts. And it is the common excuse of men to say, they thinke no harme, as though it were enough, to hatch no mischieuous and harmefull Conceites, notwithstanding they doe exceede in idle and vnprofitable Imaginations. Whereby it may bee seene that men are so farre from reforming this fault, and auoyding this theef, that they will not take it for a fault, nor esteeme it as a theefe of time. But this swallowes vp most of our solitarie houres, when men are in bed, or alone in the night season, and cannot sleepe,

or when they bee iourneying and walking without company, they cannot then poſsibly talke with others when no man is preſent. Yet their minde doth buſie it ſelfe in idle talking with it ſelfe, caſting a thouſand fond things before ones eies; as what if this ſhould be, or what if that ſhould come to paſſe, and much adoe to little purpoſe. This rouing and friſking of the fantaſie, like a wanton calfe, let looſe from the ſtall, is a fretting worm that eats out a great deale of moſt mens time, ſo that they cannot redeeme it, for the profit of their hearts. This puts by good meditations, and ſuggeſts fethery light ſtuffe that hath no good ſubſtance in it, froth and fome which is not nouriſhment to the minde, but rather poyſon, in that it fils it full of winde. And a windy heart is no leſſe burdenſome then a windy ſtomack. This caſts out the cogitation of Gods benefits that one may not bee thankfull for them; it ſhoulders away the thought of ones owne ſinnes, that hee may not renew his Godly ſorrow and repentance for them; it juſſels out the conſideration of Gods Graces,

that

that we cannot set our affections on fire, too long and labour after them. And in all these respects it takes away the benefit of much good opportunitie. For euery time a man is alone, seperated from all company, and outward busines, there is an excellent occasion of furthering his owne soule, offred vnto him. If any thing grieue him, he may freely disburden his heart into Gods bosome. If hee faulted any way hee may haue full and free scope to confesse and bewaile it, if hee want any good thing, there is leasure and place as in effectual manner, and with as many words as one can to beg it of the Lord. Thus great riches might come to the soule by a well-spent solitarinesse. But vaine Cogitations doe deprriue a man of all this, and doe so blow vp the mind with that which is nothing, as it growes swolne, like the flesh of him which hath the dropsie, so that it may well be called the dropsie of the minde. Now, a helpe against this vanitie of the minde breaking forth in idle thoughts and fancies; First, wee must take the counsell of *Salomon, to keepe the heart* Pro. 4. 23

with all diligence. The hart is that which must be narrowly looked vnto, that euill and vnprofitable thoughts rise not vp in it. Here must be the speciall care to preuent, first breeding and ingendring of sinne, in the most inward parts.

This theefe will be still filching and stealing time continually, doe what one can. Wherefore a watchfull and wary eye must be had thereunto, and a diligent garde must be set before the heart, to keep out such imaginations from entring, as bee like rogues and vagrants worth nothing, and alwaies come to steale something. When a man makes conscience of his thoughts, & obserues them to what end they tend, this will be an excellent help to keepe them from wandering, whereas if one will follow the prouerbe, and esteeme them as free, they will neuer bee kept from a busie fondnesse, like Ants in a mole-hill, that runne vp and downe hither and thither, and doe nothing.

Then in the second place, we must labour to bee prouided beforehand, of some profitable matter or subiect, whervnto

vnto to bend the thoughts in ſolitarineſſe. Something that tends to the glory of God, and our owne good, either in matters of the ſoule, or the lawfull affaires of the body, muſt bee let into the ſoule to take vp the roome, & the bnſie fancies may bee the better ſtopt out. And indeed the Lord hath prouided a Chriſtian of good ſtore of ſuch matter, if hee be not wanting to himſelfe. For there is nothing that offers it ſelf to any of our ſences, which doth not alſo offer to our minde (if it were not ſtark blind) ſome glorious attribute of God to bee ſeene and conſidered of. So that to want occaſion of good thoughts in this varietie of matter, is to want light at noone-tide, that proceeds from nothing but from want of eyes. But this is a great help to him that can ſee to ſet his ſoule a worke firſt on the good things. For if one haue let his heart looſe at firſt, he ſhall not (without much paines & toyle) catch it againe, and haue it within commaund. Thus doing, a great part of vain cogitations ſhall be cut off.

Now comes to bee handled the fift

and

and worſt of all the fiue conſumers of time, which is ſo much the more dangerous, becauſe it is in ſome honeſt reckoning among moſt men, and is eſteemed as the right Lord and true owner of that time which for the moſt part it holds by vſurpation and iniurie. This is the immoderate care of the world, & of things of this life, though in themſelues honeſt and lawfull, when a man doth winde himſelfe into ſuch a labirinth and maze of affaires, as hee can not get out at fit times to ſpirituall and religious duetyes, at leaſt not to thoſe which are priuate, when the hart is ſo ſurchatged with bargaines, and purchaſes, and buying and ſelling, and building, and ſuch like, that God and Goodneſſe, Chriſt and Saluation, Heauen and Hell, come not into a mans minde once in a day, ſcarce once in a weeke, or at leaſt, if they come, they bee quickly ſhut out, and haue no long nor quiet entertainement there, when the ſoule is ouerwhelmed with caring, thinking, deuiſing, and ſtriuing how to grow great here, and is ſo toſſed in the gulfe of earthly matters, that it cannot

come

come to land (as it were) to settle it selfe in any proportion to thinke how it may grow great in heauen, and how it may get possession of the true treasure. This is a wondrous consumer of good houres, digging them all into the dunghil of this world. Christ findes fault with this in the Parable. The men bidden to the feast had farmes, and Oxen, and wiues, and such matters in hand (businesse forsooth of more importance then so) and therfore could not come. And the thornie ground had so much carking and caring, how to liue, that it doth euen choak the Word, the good seede could not grow therby. And the Lord complaines of them of the captiuitie of Iudah, that they could find time to build their owne houses, yea, and to seele them too, but, they sayd, it was no time to build the house of God. So this sinne doth ingrose all the time to it selfe, and will not giue elbow roome to any good exercise, especially to any priuate exercises, without which the publike are but as meat without digestion. And yet it comes like an honest & approueable thing painted

Mat. 22.

Mat. 13.

Hag. 1. 13.

with

with the name of thriftineſſe and paines in ones lawfull calling. To fence our ſelues againſt this rauenous and lurking fault, we muſt binde our ſelues to theſe three rules, which all depend vpon the
Mat.6.33. rule of Chriſt, that bids vs firſt ſeeke the kingdome of God, firſt in time, and firſt in affection. And againe, *Lay vp your*
20.ver. *treaſure in Heauen.* Hence I ſay, three rules may bee collected, to which hee that would not be ſpoyled of good occaſions to the ſoule by worldlines, muſt more and more farme himſelfe and his life.

The firſt is that no man ſuffer himſelfe to entet vpon ſo many buſineſſes, or any ſo egerly, as that his ordinary affaires ſhould hinder himſelfe or his family from the performance of ordinary religious exerciſes.

The common and daylie matters of this world in any mans calling whatſoeuer, ſhould not draw him or his familie from common and daily duties of religion, ſuch are reading, praying, meditating, and religious obſeruing of the Sabboth: for here a man muſt take care for his

his houſhold as well as for himſelfe, that hee doe not hinder them from taking conuenient time to pray, and read, &c. by forcing vpon them an ouer great burthen of ordinary buſineſſe. For if the ſoule be to be preferred before the bodie, and heauen before earth, then thoſe cuſtomable matters that pertaine to the ſauing of the ſoule muſt bee ſet before, much more ſtand equall with the things that pertaine to the body. Secondly, the extraordinary works of our calling, (if any fall out) muſt not barre vs from the extraordinary workes of Religion. As for example, harueſt & hay-time or the like, are extraordinary times for the buſineſſe for the body: ſo preparation to the Sacrament, faſting, (if neede ſo require) and ſuch like, are extraordinary works for the ſoule. Now the care of inning ones corne or graſſe muſt not keepe him from taking time to prepare himſelfe to the Sacrament, or to faſt at his neede. So the receiuing of the Lords ſupper is matter of more then ordinary vſe for the ſoule, & ſome needful iourny ſtands in the like manner for the body:

But

But a man muſt rather deferre his iourney (if it may bee put off without ouermuch hinderance to him) then omit the receiuing of the Lords ſupper. The ſame rule muſt be kept in all other particulars. For if the ſoule be more worth, and muſt be more carefully attended on than the body (as it is no reaſon the hand-maide ſhould take place of the miſtreſſe) then thoſe things which doe after a peculiar manner concerne the good and profit thereof, muſt not bee neglected for ſuch as doe more ſpecially helpe the ſtate of the body outwardly. Laſtly, if ſome outward duty of religion haue ben put off from the time wherein it ſhould be performed by ſome ſodaine and vnexpected buſineſſe, that required ſuch haſt (as in ſuch caſe ordinary duties of religion may be deferred) then ſome ordinary buſineſſe of leſſe waight muſt in recompence giue place to that exerciſe afterwards, and a man muſt finde time for that, whether it bee reading, praying, or meditating, by leauing vndone (for that ſpace) ſomething that may bee better ſpared. And thus you haue

heard

heard what be thoſe ſpeciall euils which lye in waite to couſen vs of our good time, and how they may be preuented. And ſo the firſt part is handled, namely from what time is to bee redeemed.

Now followes to ſhew what it is that is to be redeemed, and ſo you ſhall fully know wherein this duety conſiſts. Now by Time the Apoſtle means two things. Firſt, the very paſsing away of houres and minutes, the ſpace and leaſure of any thing. And ſecondly, the good occaſions or opportunities, that fall out in this ſpace. For the word in the originall ſignifies not alone the very ſliding of minutes, but the ſpace conſidered alſo with ſome ſpeciall fitneſſe that it hath for ſome good, which we call the ſeaſon of it. Now for the firſt, it ſhall not bee needfull to ſay any more, being that euery one knows, that euery thing muſt haue ſome ſpace wherein to bee done. And he that will auoid the fiue forenamed euils, ſhall neuer want time or the ſpace wherein to doe or get good. But for the occaſions & fit oportunities that fall out, now for this, now for that, in

this ſpace, it is ſome more skill to finde them out and make vſe of them.

Now theſe ſeaſons are all of two ſorts. Firſt, ſuch whereby a man may more eaſily get ſome good to himſelfe. Secondly, ſuch wherby a man may with more fitneſſe and eaſe doe ſome good. Of the firſt ſort, namely, ſeaſonable opportunities to get good, I will name three particulars which are moſt needfull to be conſidered, and by proportion of which any man may come to the knowledge of other like. The firſt, when God continues the Goſpell, offring daylie the Word and Sacrament, and calling to repentance and amendment of life. This is the ſeaſon of repenting, this is the harueſt wherein wee may reape Chriſt, if wee be not negligent. This is the acceptable yeere of the Lord, in which one ſhall bee receiued if he returne. Whileſt wiſdome lifts vp her voyce, whileſt her meſſengers come daylie to inuite vs, whileſt her gates ſtand open, and her dinner ſtands ready dreſt, whileſt her meſſage is done vnto vs, all this time, if a man will ſtriue

and

and endeauour to turne from his ſinne, to leaue his folly, and forſake his ſcorning, hee ſhall be a welcome gueſt, ſhee will accept him, help him, and giue him an increaſe of grace, till hee bee become ſtrong with her meates.

Whoſoeuer liues vnder the preaching of the Goſpell, hath this priuiledge annexed to the outward teaching, that if he will but ſtriue and pray to God, to giue him ſtrength to repent and amend his wayes and to turne to him, God will (vpon his promiſe) heare his praiers and aſsiſt him: but when the goſpell is gone, then the date is paſt, a man may call, and not be heard; and cry, and not be regarded. So then euery man redeemes this ſeaſon of the Goſpell, when hee giues himſelfe to conſider ſeriouſly of thoſe faults which hee finders in himſelfe, and heares ſharply reprooued in the word, and hereupon reſolues to forſake them, and doth not onely his owne beſt endeauour, but earneſtly cals vpon God for his helpe, without which his power is but weakenes and ineffectuall, when hee doth alſo duely ponder vpon the

holy Commandements that he heares preached, and thoſe Exhortations that are daylie ſounded in his eares to moue him to do ſuch dueties as God requires, and hereupon concludes with himſelfe to ſet about this worke, and craues the ſtrength of God to beare him through in the ſame. And when hee doth aduiſedly thinke of the promiſes that are generally proclaimed, and labours to get ſome aſſurance that he is ſuch a one to whom the right of theſe promiſes appertaine. Thus doing, I ſay, one redeemes the time wiſely, and makes his aduantage of the Goſpell while it continues, which is a thing that all men ſhould doe, but ſo rare in the world as that it is wonder the Lord hath ſo patiently continued his louing voice, when men ſcoffe at it and will not heare. The Lord hath and doth ſend his Prophets amongſt vs, as he did among the Iewes, riſing vp early, and ſending them which with all earneſtneſſe doe proclaime the dangerous euent that ſhall follow vpon prophaneneſſe, neglect and contempt of Gods word, breaking of his Sabboth,

rayling, wrathfulneſſe, whordome, wantonneſſe, couetouſnes, theeuing, oppreſſing, ſlandering, lying, and ſuch like. Yet how many runne on in theſe euils preſumptuouſly, ruſhing like the horſe into the battaile, with an vnreaſonable boldneſſe, not fearing any danger, and ſhutting their eares againſt theſe reproofes, as the deafe Adder doth, that they may not be moued by them to amendment. Ah, how contrary is this to redeeming the time. If any man haue hitherto loſt the ſeaſon, let him now grow wiſe, and euen at this time turne to God, and beg power to forſake theſe ſinnes. How often and how earneſtly are men exhorted to all good works by the continuall voyce of God ſpeaking vnto them by his ſeruants; to read the word of God daylie; to pray priuately; to meditate vpon the word; to watch ouer their dayes; and to call themſelues to a reckoning euery day for the faults committed in the day. Yet who regards this voyce, who markes theſe exhortations, where is one that hath inioyned himſelfe to ſome conſtancy in praying, reading, and

the forenamed dueties? This is to sleep in harueſt, a moſt fooliſh practiſe and vnwiſe, wherefore whileſt there is yet a little time left, whilſt we haue the light, let vs walk in it, that we be not ouertaken with darkneſſe. Hee that hath not yet begun, let him be ſorry that he hath put it off ſo late, and now ſet foot into theſe wayes of God, whileſt God ſets out his word as a candle to direct him, and as his hand to leade him by. The promiſes of God are in like ſort publiſhed amongſt vs. Happineſſe is held vp as a reward of all true hearted Chriſtians, and the crowne of life is propoſed to thoſe which are ſound and faithfull members of Ieſus Chriſt. And yet as though all were ſure to get it, or it wer not worth ſeeking by any, the moſt men flatter themſelues in their ſins, and will needes promiſe theſe good things to themſelues, when they haue no aſſurance or proofe out of Gods word, whereby to lay claime or title to them. This is a grieuous and a dangerous neglecting of time. And if any haue not yet made ſure worke this way, let him euen

now

now ſet about it, whilſt the word as a touchſtone is before him, by which he may try himſelf, & which wil make him ſuch a one as hee ſhould be, if hee will ſtriue to follow it, and pray for abilitie to bee ruled by it. So then whilſt God holds out his benefites, and ſtands with his armes open to accept vs, let vs take his benefits, and be perſwaded to come vnto him in good earneſt, let it bee too late to trauaile when midnight ſhall come in ſtead of noone day. This is the firſt and chiefeſt opportunitie of getting good: namely, to ioyne with the Goſpell and follow it with our endeauours and prayers, by which it ſhall be made effectuall vnto vs. The ſecond opportunitie of getting good is in time of youth and health, whilſt the vigor and ſtrength of the body and mind is fit for labour and capable of inſtruction. And *Salomon* in his booke of Penance, *viz. Eccleſiaſtes*, bids *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, before the euill dayes come.* Eccle. 12. 1 Theſe dayes of youth and health are good dayes when he which will vſe them, hath his memory ſtedfaſt

to call to minde his euill wayes, that he may bewaile them, and to treasure vp good instructions & promises that may guide and comfort him, when the sins will ioyne with the mind, and the minde hath the body as a fit instrument to seeke the kingdome of heauen, if a man will addresse himselfe vnto it; but the dayes of old age and sicknes faile much of the commodious fitnesse for good. The memory is cracked, the head and vnderstanding is weake, and especially the time of sickenesse is so filled with paine, so shaken with distractions, and incumbred with griefes and sorrowes, that one is nothing fit to repent, or pray, or heare, or to doe any such thing.

Now when a man in the prime of his dayes, and in the fulnes of his health, will giue himselfe to seeke heauen, will heare the word, and meditate vpon it, and apply it to himselfe, will confesse his sinnes, and force himselfe to bewaile them, will pray to God for good things, and set the whole course of his life in a right frame, hee hath well taken to opportunitie, and hee shall haue rest in his

latter

latter dayes, much quiet and contentment, at least much strength and assistance in his sickneſſe, becauſe hee hath ſomething in ſtore againſt the time of want.

But alas, how doe the common ſort of men, bewray their monſtrous folly in this behalfe? What more common then that ſottiſh and brutiſh ſpeech, at leaſt ſuch ignorant & profane thoughts, men will repent when they be old, and cry God mercy when they feele themſelues ſicke, and amend all when they be ready to go out of the world. And foolliſh man, thou knoweſt not whether thou ſhalt dye ſodainely? whether thou ſhalt haue thy wits and ſences? or whether thou ſhalt haue power of heart to make the leaſt coulour of repentance in thoſe extremities? How many haue died ſodainely? How many ſottiſhly? And yet how doe men for all theſe warnings, deferre the beſt buſineſſe, namely, the work of repentance & turning to God, which will require the whole ſtrength of the ſoule, to the worſt and moſt craſie time of ſickneſſe or old age? As if a

prisoner at what time a man was offring him a pardon, and calling vpon him to take it some good space before the Assises, should say: nay, let me alone, I will not looke after my pardon till immediately before I am to come before the Iudge. This were a most fond part, especially, if it wer so that the theefe knew not whether or no the next day should be the day of his arraignemẽt: so the case stands betwixt the Lord and vs. If any man therfore haue ben so little carefull of his owne eternall good, as to put off repentance and conuersion till that dead time, or doth foster any such harmefull conceit in his heart, let him now cast it out, and now that hee hath his health and strength, vpon better deliberation take in hand this worke.

Be not so extreamely mad, as to giue more time to the diuell, than to God, especially to giue the principall time. He were a foolish trauailer that would willingly gallop all the day quite contrary to his way, and being told of it would answere, when it drawes towards Sun-set I will turne into the right way.

Why be men thus blockiſh for their ſoules, that knowing themſelues to bee out of the way of life, will yet of purpoſe deferre to ſet their feete into the right path till ſickneſſe or age, when the Sun of their life is at the point of ſetting. Ah, let our prouerbe teach vs more wit; *Make hay while the Sun ſhynes.* Turne, turn, whilſt thou haſt health & ſtrength, vſe all to get repentance and ſaluation. The laſt cheefe opportunitie of getting good, is, when a man hath company, and is in the ſociety of ſome godly wiſe man, able to giue ſound counſell & direction, able to anſwere all doubts, obiections, and ſcruples of ones minde; now there is a fit opportunity to grow in wiſdome, to be reſolued of all doubts, and to ſeeke direction.

So then a man ought not to ſuffer baſhfulneſſe, or other fooliſh matters to put by that good communication, wherby hee might enrich his ſoule. It is a ſpeciall fauour of God that any man can come where his ſeruants are, that haue excellent gifts, & he doth depriue himſelfe of much good that will not ſeeke

to

to benefit himselfe by them. When the woman of Samaria perceiued Christ to be a Prophet, shee proposed her doubt vnto him, albeit hee was a stranger. When *Iohn* Baptist might be come to, the Publicans and sinners came and asked what they should doe. Whilst the Iayler had *Paul* in his keeping, he came to aske that needfull question: *What shall I doe to be saued?* So if there be any man whose heart is perplexed with some doubt, or ouerburdened with some temptation, or ouermastered by some sinne, it is a part of good discretion for such a one to goe and seeke the aduise of some able Christian or wise man, before that either himselfe be too far gone, or he want the opportunitie of such a councellor or helper.

These be three speciall occasions of obtaining good to a mans owne soule from things without him. In all which to take the time is a most commendable point of wisedome, but to bee negligent is such folly as *Salomon* reproues, when he saith: *That a foole hath a price in his hand to get wisedome, but he wants*

a heart. Oh that men would beware of this hartleſnes, and take heed of looſing their price, by which they might get wiſedome.

Now I come to ſpeake of the occaſions of doing good. And theſe are eyther in others or in themſelues. Firſt, in others, & that for their ſoule and body. Sometimes a man ſhall finde a kinde of tractableneſſe in thoſe with whom hee hath to deale, that their ears ſtand open, and they are ready to drink in an exhortation or reproofe by reaſon of ſome affliction, that is vpon them, or ſome need they haue of our help, or ſuch like occaſion. Here is time for a kinde and ſound admonition, then a man ought in all loue, and yet with all plaineneſſe to follow the occaſion, *ſtriking* (as our prouerbe is) *whilſt the iron is hot*, ſpeaking when he ſees him in the melting vaine, ready to take all well, and in good part. And ſo *Elihu* notes, that when a man is brought to his death bed, and to abhorre all worldly delights, then his eares are bored, and then there is work for an interpreter. Before the bones clattered,

and

and the mourners looked for the funeral, and interpreter was dispised, but now his words are obserued. Thus a man may doe much good to his neighbours or seruants soule, if hee waite for a time when he is fit to receiue admonition, & then giues it him, as the husbandman in dry weather waytes for a shower of raine, and then sets in his plow. Againe, for the body, sometimes one shall meet with one that hath true neede, that is in distresse for his bodily estate, and doth indeed want reliefe. This is an occasion and fit time to shew liberalitie. Now a man must open his purse, and be ready to giue freely, I meane not, that euery time a man meetes a begger hee should bee giuing (for to those a man should not giue, but in the very extremitie of necessitie) but if our brother hath beene afflicted by any losse through fire, or such like) that he do not make himselfe needy by idlenesse, but it comes vpon him by some hand of God) here is an obiect fit for mercy, and here one may be seasonably liberal, here is an altar, offer the Sacrifice of almes vpon it, which

is

is a thing wherewith God is well pleaſed. Some other time, ſparing may bee more fit, but now is a ſeaſon to be more free of gift, and open handed.

There is an occaſion of doing good offred in others, wherein I haue named theſe two particulars, that euery man might accordingly take notice of other like. Then there is alſo occaſion of doing good offred in ones ſelfe, whether by ſome outward thing that befals him, or by ſome inward ſtirring of the mind and affections. As outwardly when a time comes in, wherein we haue receiued ſome more ſpeciall benefite, this ſhould prouoke vs to more thankfulneſſe by remembrance of the benefite. Thus this time of Chriſts Natiuitie ſhould (if any way) be celebrated, that it might turne to an occaſion of more hartie thankſgiuing and more true obedience vnto Chriſt, that gaue himſelfe for our ſins, and tooke our nature vpon him, that in it hee might beare our iniquities. So when we be in the enioying of Gods Creatures, whilſt we be eating and drinking, or ſuch like, here is a

ſpeciall

ſpeciall ſeaſon to lift vp the hart to God, and to kindle a flame of praiſe by this fewell, that our thankes might be ſo much the more earneſt, by how much we haue a more preſent feeling of gods mercy, and doe euen taſt how good hee is.

On the other ſide a man is ſometimes preſſed with a ſore croſſe and affliction that pincheth his ſoule, here is a very fit occaſion of humbling ones ſelfe, and examining ones heart. For in theſe afflictions God cals to humiliation for the moſt part, which duty being performed after a man may reioice in his affliction. But whiles the burden of the croſſe is heauie, here is a notable meanes to further one in the worke of humiliation, and if one can take the time when God ſmites, he may (at leaſt he ought) cauſe his hart to ſtoup before him with more eaſe, then when he was at more eaſe, for his body. Againe, ſomtimes a man hath a more inward ſtirring of his affections which he cannot haue at another time, This muſt be followed, greedily taken, ſometimes at the Sermon, or vpon ſome other

other occaſion, a man hearing or thinking of his ſinne, and the puniſhment due thereunto, haue a kind of pricking in his heart, and ſome touch of remorſe within him, his conſcience begins to tell him that all is not well, and hee growes to ſome orderly concluſion: Sure I will now be ſorrie for this fault, & amend it. Now if one will follow this motion, and goe after God when he cals (for this is one of his inward callings) and not ſhoulder it out with fond mirth, but nouriſh it by a plaine confeſsion of his ſinne to God, and an harty begging of grace and ſtrength from him, to do that which he now ſees he ſhould doe; this will come to godly ſorrow, and ſo to repentance, but elſe if he choake it and quench it, it will vaniſh, and the hart will be more hard frozen in the dregs of ſin. So that if there be any whoſe heart at this time at the ſpeaking of theſe words, whoſe ſoule ſmites him for his ſwearing, lying, ſabboth breaking, whordome, drunkenneſſe, gameming, couetouſnes, rayling, or the like ſin, let him when he is gone out of the Church, caſt himſelfe

downe

downe in the preſence of God, confeſſe this his ſinne or ſinnes freely, without diſſembling, labour to be more ſorrowfull for them then euer he was, and pray to God to pul him out of this mire. This if he doe, he ſhall take the time, he ſhall be a conuert, the Lord will receiue him, as the vnthriftie prodigall ſonne was receiued, and by redeeming the time he ſhall finde redemption to his ſoule. But if he deſpiſe this admonition of God, his ſoule ſhall be more feared then before, his heart ſhall bee deliuered to a greater hardneſſe and ſenceleſneſſe then euer before, and ſo be further off from repentance and life.

But alas, the frantick dealing of men in this caſe is too palpable, and to bee wondred at, when Gods word ſtrikes vpon them, when they feele the keeneneſſe of it, when the threatnings haue cut, ſo that they ſmart for it; then they run to dicing, carding, drinking, dauncing, &c. as it were of ſet purpoſe to driue away the ſpirit of God, that was coming towards them to heale their ſoule. None is ſo madde to take ſuch courſes

courſes for his body, that when he feeles the ſore to ſmart, then to run from the Phiſition, and couer it ouer with a clout, or ſtriue to forget it: yet for their ſoules a number deale ſo ſenceleſſely in this thing as much as in any other, verifying that name which the holy Ghoſt hath giuen vnto them, when he termes them mad men: for it is a propertie peculiar to a mad man, that feeling paine, he will hate the Phiſition, and run away from him that would help. Oh, that thoſe of vs which haue hitherto beene ſo mad, would returne now to their right minds, and to God to be healed. Againe, ſometimes a mans heart is ſtirred vp with an inward and ſecret reioycing or gladnes. Then ſaith Saint *Iames*, *If any man bee merry let him ſing Pſalmes.* Now he ſhall doe it with a cheerefull courage indeed. And therefore *Dauid* would in ſuch a caſe riſe at midnight to ſing a Pſalme, rather then he would looſe the ſeaſon, when it would reliſh with him ſo well. Iames.5.13

Sometimes alſo, a man or a woman ſhall feele a ſecret penſiueneſſe growing ouer his heart, ſo that it euen melts

as the ground that thawes after a froſt, and hee could euen weepe abundantly, teares offer themſelues in a full meaſure. Here is an excellent occaſion of renuing ones repentance. Now whateuer be ones company, whateuer bee the matter in hand, except it be of abſolute neceſsitie, let him leaue it off and betake him to his chamber or ſome ſecret place, let him fall on his knees, now let him open his mouth and acknowledge his ſins againſt himſelfe, giuing vent to his griefe, and turning all to godly ſorrow whatſoeuer the occaſion was at firſt. Thus if any body doe, his repentance ſhall receiue a notable increaſe. But if he paſſe it ouer, his heart will not anſwere his deſire another time.

Furthermore, ſometimes a mans hart is earneſtly moued with ſome hungry deſire to enioy ſome grace of God, and great longing after ſome chriſtian vertue: now let him in the heat and flame of his deſire addreſſe himſelfe to prayer; then one ſhal ſend vp ſuch peircing cries and giue ſuch a loude knocke againſt the gates of Chriſts mercie, that hee can-

cannot chuſe but heare, and ſend one back with an almes, as it were. Thus he redeemes the time: but elſe his deſires will be ſo cold and chill at another time, that he ſhall ſcarce thruſt a petition out of his lips, and then theſe drop downe at his feet, and doe him little good. And thus in euery other through the turning of our affections, we muſt follow Gods ſpirit, yea, or nature when it leads vs, wiſely turning all to ſpirituall vſes. And thus you may perceiue what it is to redeeme the time, and how it may bee attained. Now let vs come to ſome briefe application of the point.

Firſt, this point thus explayned meets vſe. with a number of imperfections euen in the beſt, and him that is moſt carefull of his wayes, of which we are now to take notice, and purpoſe amendment, if we haue not hitherto conſidered of them. For this is a fault to which a man (euen in a good meaſure ſpirituall) is ſubiect for want of redeeming the time, that he comes to that lazie paſſe now and then, as he hath nothing to do, nothing where about to ſettle himſelfe. It is a carnall

vnſetlednes in a chriſtian to be ſo negligent of his time, as that he ſhould haue any minute of time which hee knowes not how to beſtow vpon ſome good & profitable vſe. The Lord offers ſuch a multitude of occaſions to doe & receiue good, that if we could with wiſedome take them, there is no houre paſſeth vs in which we might not doe or get ſome good. And if there be nothing elſe, yet this is ſomething where about hee hath good occaſion to be buſied, euen to fall out with himſelfe, becauſe he hath nothing (I meane he ſees nothing that he hath to do.) Sometimes if men ſee their ſeruants ſtanding idle & vnbuſied, they can aske them with a kinde of indignation, what, can you find nothing to doe? And ſure the Lord might come with this queſtion diuers times to vs, and ſay as it is in this parable: *Why ſtand you all the day idle?* asking whether the world were ſo emptie of occaſions, and our ſelues ſo perfectly well, as that wee can finde nothing to doe? But there is no houre paſſeth vs which wee ſhould not find fit for ſome good thing, if we could

catch

catch the opportunitie before it be turned, and did not harme our ſelues for want of diligent redeeming the time.

Yet there are other faults of which Chriſtians are to be warned. As to begin with the laſt firſt: How many bee there that are ſo ſtuffed with worldly buſineſſes, and yet are greedy of more, as that they cannot finde leaſure one houre in a day, nay ſcarce in a weeke, to beſtow vpon reading, praying, meditating or conferring? Yea, as though time were made for nothing but to ſeeke wealth and tranſitory things, ſo it is the chiefeſt of their care. It appeares that ſuch labor not for conſcience but for gaine, becauſe they cannot breake off ordinary labours ſo long, as well to performe ordinarie duties of religion. Many may ſay (with greefe enough if they did well) that their hands are ſo full of the world, as that they can ſcarce through the weeke, take the Bible into their hands to reade any thing therein, vnleſſe perhaps it bee in the Church at ſome publike meeting. Thus men which are borne to a better inheritance are content to weare out

themſelues in the earth, as if they were to piriſh in the earth with other baſer Creatures. Here is one fault to be amended then, let no Chriſtian beſtow ſo much time in the world, as that he cannot finde ſufficient to ſeeke heauen and the things thereof.

Then for the matter of ſports, mee thinkes ſome Chriſtians ſhould euen ſhrinke before the Word of reproofe comes to them, when they may thinke of ſo many houres ſpent, ſuch a day at bowels; ſo many, it may be, the next day in ſhooting; ſo many the third day in ſhouel-boord, or the like exerciſes: happily in themſelues not vnlawfull, and when they come to reckoning for religious exerciſes, the count comes in very ſlowly, by the minutes or quarters, ſome halfe quarter of an houre or therabouts beſtowed ſuch a day in praying alone, and ſome three or foure dayes after about a quarter of an houre in reading, and (it may bee) the next weeke, ſome halfe quater more in meditation. And thus if the expences of time were written in our debt bookes, as they bee in

Gods

Gods, wee might euen bluſh to read, ſo many items for pleaſure and ſport, and ſcarce one or two in a ſide for priuate religious exerciſes.

Then for our words: May wee not hang downe our heads with ſhame to think that God made our tongues, and we ſpeak ſcarce one word in an hundred to his glory. Idle words: euen many of thoſe whom we are to regard as chriſtians, count them no faults, neyther come to repent for them. It was but a word out of the way, ſay they. But this power to ſpeak (being a gift peculier to men aboue all beaſts) ought to be more preciouſly regarded, then that it ſhould be abuſed for baſe trifles.

Then for idle thoughts; who makes queſtion of them almoſt? Alas, we doe not remember that God hath ſearching eyes and feirce, which peirce into the depth of ones ſoule. Wee dreame that thoughts are not ſo much, and ſpare our ſelues in our vnthriftineſſe, when wee ſhould deale more religiouſly with our ſelues.

Laſtly, ſome might bee reproued

for too long lying in bed, and ſpending more houres in ſlugging or ſleeping, then health and ſtrength doth require. Many perhaps will thinke that it is left to their own pleaſure, & that the preacher is too buſie, if hee take vpon him to teach them when to riſe, as though it were no fault to ouer-ſleepe themſelues. Indeede ſome old and ſickly mens bodyes muſt take it when they may, but for the greateſt part of men, if they knew what good the firſt halfe houre of the earely morning ſpent in religious exerciſes would bring them, they would not loue ſleepe ſo well, as for it to neglect them. It is well ſaid: *Hee that ſeekes me earely ſhall finde mee*, and it well may be literally vnderſtood. Therfore brethren, there is none but may ſee a fault in himſelfe in theſe reſpects, ſome or al of them, and happy is he that reſolues to mend it. Therefore if you will take good counſell, doe thus when you come home, Thinke, alas, if time muſt be reckoned for, & ſhould be redeemed; How far am I behind hand with God that (what for ſleep, what for play, what for idle babling,

ling, what for vaine thoughts, and exceſſiue worldlines) I cannot make a good account of the fortith, yea of the hundreth part of my time? And then grieue becauſe thou haſt beene ſuch an vnthrift of time, & now begin carefully to ſpare before all be gone. But now here is a reproofe more ſharp for ſome others that are not willing to heare of that eare, tell them they muſt not ſpend a whole day, or a whole night in playing & ſporting. What not at Chriſtmas? (ſay they) why you are too preciſe? well, but yet vouchſafe to conſider a litle what God ſpeaks. Thou ſaiſt: this is too much preciſenes, and ſo ſaith the world; but the Apoſtle bids to walk preciſely or warily, redeeming the time. And hee that will take time to card or dice, and to vſe lawfull recreations immoderately (I meane ſo as to be at his play the greater part of the day, & it may be ſome, if not the moſt of the night too) ſhall pay full dearely for it: eyther he muſt repent, & vndoe this with much griefe and ſorrow of hart, or els he muſt ſmart for it hereafter worſe in hell. I would not deale ouer ſharply

with

with thee: but take Gods louing admonition, and let him haue one tenth part of the foure and twentie houres, yea more a good deale then ſo, now that thou haſt more leaſure than ordinarie.

And here is yet a kinde of people that are to be more rigorouſly handled, ſuch as are all gameſters, that ſpend no one houre waking but vpon pleaſure. The world cals them ſcatter-goods, and the Lord will call them ſcatter-houres, that do miſſpend both goods & houres. Such (let them thinke of themſelues, how they will) as doe make gameing the greateſt part (if not all) of their occupation, muſt be content to heare that they haue no portion in heauen, as they can keepe no portion in earth.

How can one haue treaſure in heauen, that neuer laid vp any there. If God hate a gameſter, ſo that he will not giue him good clothes to his back (now hee hath threatned that he ſhall be clothed with rags) he will much leſſe afford him a ſeate in heauen. And howſoeuer for a time they may ruffle it out, and be clad better than their more laborious neighbors,

bors, yet this trade will ſurely vndo thē. For they haue brought this perill vpon themſelues, that either God muſt not be true or they muſt not be rich, hee muſt forfaite his truth, or they their goods; beſides their name and ſoule: wherfore let ſuch as haue hitherto giuen their dayes to ſuch an vnſanctified, an inordinate courſe, ſurceaſe from the practiſe of their lewdnes, and both in conſcience for their ſoules ſake, and in diſcreation for their goods ſake, reſolue to become better husbands of time, leaſt their gaming on earth bring beggerie to their latter dayes, and damnation to their ſoules for euer.

Laſtly, let all good chriſtians be admoniſhed to make precious account of their time, and with much carefulneſſe to take the ſeaſons and opportunities of God, according as they haue heard it is their dutie. Chriſtians either indeede purpoſe to learne, or elſe make a ſhew of ſuch a purpoſe when they come to Church. Ah, that we might all learne this thrift, and practiſe it as wee haue heard. Begin to day, and hold on ſtill, now

now is a time of remembring the moſt admirable work of Chriſts incarnation, when he was made fleſh of the Virgin, to purge vs from ſin, and ſaue vs from wrath by the ſhedding of his bloud, and ſuffrings which he endured in his fleſh. Giue not all (ah, why ſhould wee giue any of it?) this time to play, cheefly to bezelling, ſurfeting, or wantonneſſe, but take ſome ſpace to conſider of the greatneſſe of this benefit, and to be thankfull proportionably thereunto. I would I might hope to preuaile with any by this exhortation, but howſoeuer, it is needful to be ſpoken, that none may haue occaſion to pretend ignorance, you ſee or might ſee your duties in this behalfe, & in practiſing the ſame ſhall finde the benefit of it. But fooles will ſcorne admonition, and thoſe that haue accuſtomed themſelues to luſt, will not be intreated to pull their necks from out their hard yoake, & to ſerue a better Maſter. Nay, ſo fooliſh are a number, that they thinke to doe Chriſt great honour in ſpending the day wheron they imagine that hee was borne, and ſome few that follow

follow it, in more then ordinarie riot & ſinfull exceſſe: as though he wer a God that loued iniquitie; and were delighted with drinking, and ſwilling, & gameing, and ſwearing, & ſurfeting, and all diſorder. But thoſe that know Chriſt, know full well that he is not pleaſed with ſuch prancks. Wherefore if we will ſpend a day to Chriſt, ſpend it more religiouſly and ſoberly then all other dayes, not more prophanely and luxuriouſly. We ſhould neither forget his birth, but when we obſerue ſome ſpeciall time of remembring it, ſhew that we remember his goodneſſe by doing good, more honour to his name, not by committing more rebellion againſt him.

And to conclude, as at this time ſo at all times, let all men that would haue their ſoules well furniſhed with inward ſubſtance, play the good husbands in taking time and opportunity whenſoeuer we finde any fit occaſion of getting or doing good, in our ſelues or others, let it not ſlip, but lay hold vpon it, and vſe it. It is ioyfull to thinke (if we could think of it ſeriouſly) what commoditie this thrift

thrift would bring, how much knowledge and godlineſſe might hee get that would keepe his tongue and heart carefully to good matters? What a large treaſure of good works might he haue, that would be ready whenſoeuer his neighbours neceſsitie called for help, to ſtretch out his hand for his reliefe? And when he ſaw him fit for an admonition would wiſely beſtow it vpon him? How full of grace ſhould his old age and ſickneſſe be, that would giue his health to God, and his firſt yeeres to the ſeruice of his ſoule? How great acquaintance might hee get in the pallace of Wiſedome, that would come to her at her firſt call, and enter ſo ſoone as the doores were ſet open? How many ſins might a man leaue, and how much power ſhould hee get ouer all ſinne that when his heart ſmites him, would turne to God by prayer and confeſsion? What great Grace would affliction bring, if a man would ſettle himſelfe to humiliation, and gaging his heart in time of affliction? How much thankfulneſſe might he haue that would lift

vp

vp his heart to God in the fruition of euery bleſsing? How many feruent prayers might hee ſtore vp in heauen, that would not fore-ſlow time, when hee feeles his deſires earneſt? How comfortably might we weepe ouer Chriſt, and how plentifully, that would take the tide of teares, and turne all penſiueneſſe to this vſe? And how many ſweet and cheerefull Pſalmes might a Chriſtian ſing, if he would turne all his mirth into a Pſalme, and offer it vp to God? Oh, what a large increaſe of grace would this care bring? How ſhould his ſoule thriue that would bee thus husbandlie? Surely as the common ſpeech hath commended a little land well tilled, before much more ground that is careleſſlie dreſſed: So the weaker meanes with this care, would bee more auaileable to inrich the heart, then are the ſtrongeſt without it.

It is not the greatneſſe of ones liuing that makes one rich, but the good imploying, and warie husbanding of it: ſo it is not the greatneſſe of the meanes, but the diligent redeeming of time, to make

make vſe of the meanes, that makes the ſoule wealthy. But if great meanes ioyne with great care, the increaſe will bee ſo much the more large, as a large liuing with good husbandry. But alas, hence comes it that ſome in the ſtore of all good meanes of ſaluation are very beggars and banckrouts, becauſe of their negligence to take the time & fit ſeaſon. They let paſſe all good opportunities, and care not for any occaſion for the Soule, and how can their Soule thriue? Wherefore let euery true hearted Chriſtian learne this wiſedome and practiſe it, as euer hee deſires to ſtore his ſoule with that wealth which will make him glorious in the eyes of God, and much ſet by euen in heauen among the Angels. And thus much for this time, and this dutie of redeeming the time.

FINIS.

X60670
704 c